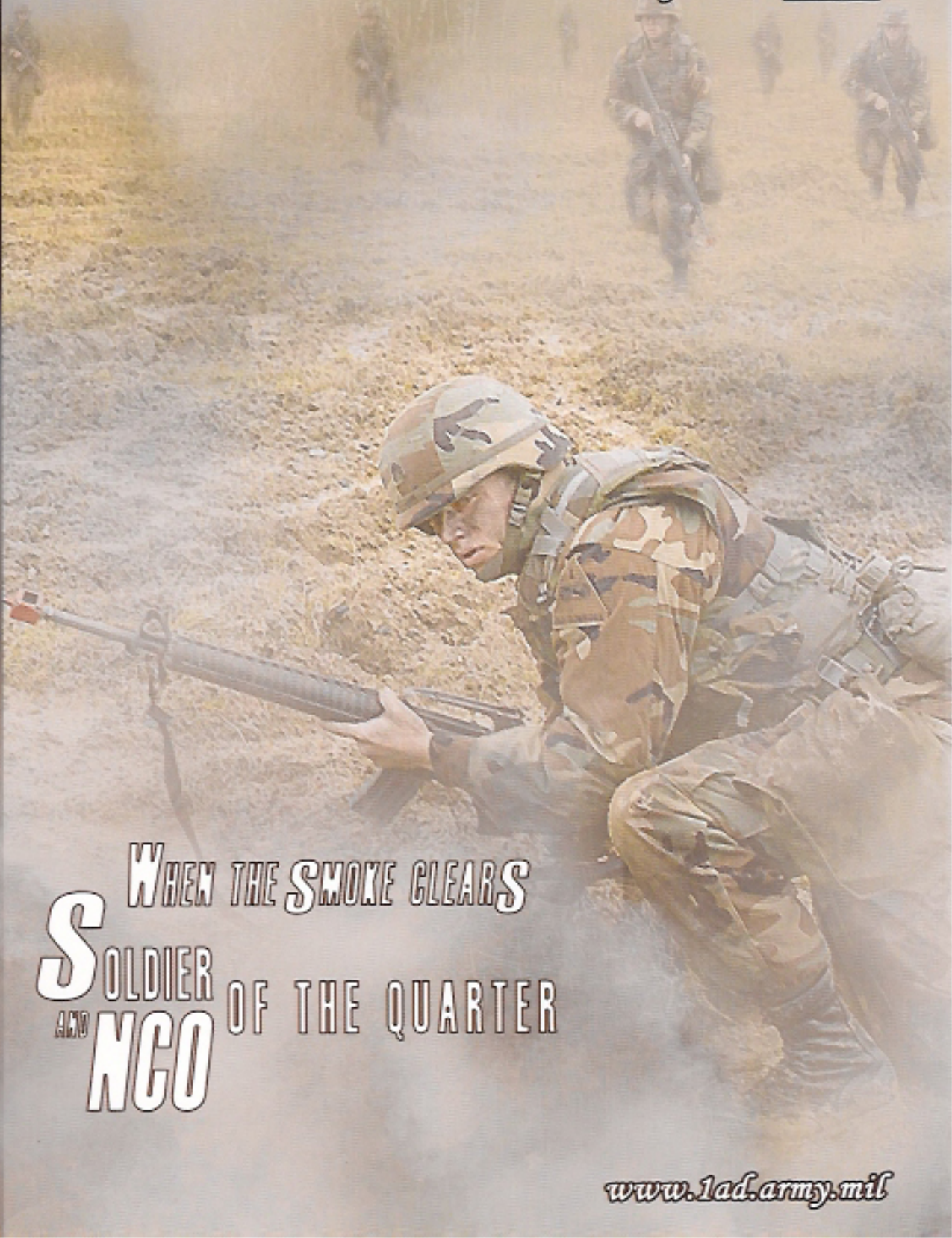


America's Tank Division



IRONSIDE

February 2005



WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS
SOLDIER AND NCO OF THE QUARTER

www.1ad.army.mil



1st Armored Division

In Action Series

IRONSIDE MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2005

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN M. McFADDEN



1/1 Cavalry



1-36 Infantry

1st Armored Division



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IRONSIDE Magazine

Published in the interest of the Soldiers of 1st Armored Division

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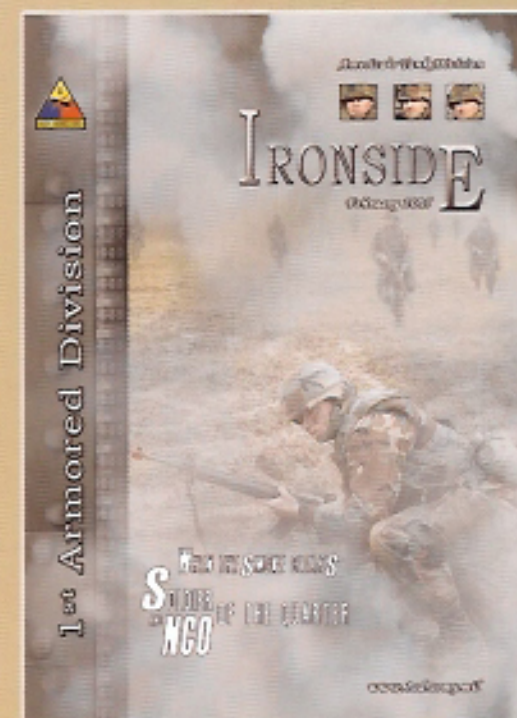
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Issue 1



COVER PHOTO



Sgt. Jessy Carr reacts to indirect fire during the 1AD Soldier/NCO of the Quarter Board in Friedberg, Germany, Jan. 2005.

Image by Sgt. Gregory F. Withrow

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Table VIII Gunnery page 14



Maj. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey

Let me begin by wishing each of you a Happy New Year.

As you see, *Ironside Magazine* is back in action! We intend *Ironside Magazine* to provide information on current events in the Division and to tell the world what you are doing. Your patriotism, perseverance, hard work, personal sacrifices, and numerous accomplishments deserve recognition—and we intend to ensure you get it. Last year, *Ironside Magazine* won several awards for excellence in journalism. It will continue to tell your story proudly.

As a Division, we're a little more than half-way through our reconstitution program. It's hard work reestablishing the SOPs and systems that define a Division after a 15-month deployment. For those of you doing this hard work in arms rooms, supply rooms, orderly rooms, and motor pools—thanks. It's important that we continue to work to

get these areas of logistics discipline "right" while we have the chance to do so.

Recently we learned that many of our Soldiers will return to Iraq later in the year. God bless you and your families for your continued service to our nation in the Global War on Terror.

I want to assure you that you will be trained and ready. We will all be trained and ready. That's the principle on which we designed our *Iron Warrior Program*. We've captured the lessons learned from our last deployment, designed a training program, and asked our superb corps of noncommissioned officers to take ownership of it. They have. It's well underway, and we will monitor it through completion.

Between now and June, we will "stay the course" and complete our reconstitution plan. As I mentioned, this includes reestablishing all of our garrison systems. It also includes retraining our individual Soldiers and their leaders on our core competencies of physical readiness, marksmanship, crew gunnery, and platoon through brigade maneuver. We'll remain focused on this reconstitution plan through the middle of June and then transition to deployment-specific organization and training.

We're also taking the lessons learned from our last deployment to make improvements in rear detachment operations and family support. Even now, we're holding quarterly updates with the 104th Area Support Group and with IMA-E to ensure we have and will continue to have the right support in place for our rear detachments and for the families of our deploying soldiers.

This is a challenging time for all soldiers and their families. We're fighting a war to ensure we can live, work, play, and worship as we choose. We're also part of an Army changing the way it is organized and the way it assigns soldiers so that we become more effective and so that our OPTEMPO becomes more pre-

Division Commander Speaks

When driving in Europe this Winter...

dictable and manageable. At such a challenging time for our Nation and our Army, it is more than just fortunate that you have chosen to serve. Unselfish service such as yours is the great blessing of our democracy. I am especially grateful that you have chosen to serve in the First Armored Division.

I offer just three bits of advice as we begin 2005 together:

1. Maintain your "iron resolve" in this Global War on Terror. You're making a difference and doing something both honorable and important with your lives. Be proud of that.

2. Don't be distracted by rumors of USAREUR re-stationing at these early stages of planning. Your chain of command will keep you informed when there is sufficient information available to do so. In the meantime, focus on what we know. If the time comes to re-station to CONUS, we'll perform that mission just like we perform every mission—the right way.

3. Be disciplined, be safe, and take care of each other. Don't let a fellow Iron Soldier or family member make a decision that could result in their injury or end their career. We owe that much to each other after what we've been through together.

I'm proud to be Iron 6.

Continue mission. Train hard.

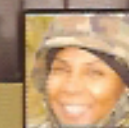
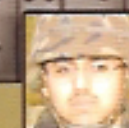
Iron Soldiers!

Martin E. Dempsey
Major General, US Army
Commanding General

Road conditions during the winter months can change very quickly in Europe, and can be deadly for unsuspecting drivers. Heavy rain, snow, black ice, freezing rain, and fog are responsible for Soldier deaths and injuries on European roads every winter. All drivers must be prepared for possible changes in road conditions to avoid injuring themselves and others. In many cases, simply reducing speed will reduce risks and prevent accidents.

The following safety tips should be used when driving in snowy conditions:

- Slow down. Triple the usual distance between your car and the one ahead.
- Stay in the plowed lane; avoid driving over the ridges between the plowed areas. If you must switch lanes, slow down, signal, and move over slowly.
- If you skid, steer into the skid. For example, if the back of your vehicle is skidding to the left, turn the steering wheel to the left.
- Do not pump your brakes and avoid locking them up. If your brakes lock, take your foot off the brake pedal for a moment.
- If you are involved in a fender-bender, move the vehicles out of the lanes of travel.
- Keep a blanket and flashlight in the vehicle.
- While driving, keep your headlights on. Keep snow and ice off your mirrors, windows, and lights.
- As always, wear your seatbelts.
- If your vehicle has an anti-lock braking system (ABS) and you must brake, be sure to press the brake pedal and hold.



TAXE\$

Community tax centers open

By Spc. Danielle Johansen

It's that time of year again—tax season. Some of us either despise its existence or fully embrace the possibility that we might walk away a little richer.

It is generally recognized that having one's taxes prepared is a difficult challenge to most service members, spouses, and U.S. civilian contractors who are stationed overseas. The Army, in recognition of the limited resources overseas personnel encounter, has provided a full range of tax preparation services to those who are valid ID card holders.

The Wiesbaden Tax Center will see people on a walk-in basis, Monday through Friday from 9am-4pm. Appointments can be made and are recommended for those customers whose taxes are more complex. For instance, you might consider scheduling an appointment if you own stocks and bonds or rental property.

On the flip-side, the tax center will be unable to service the following customers: service members or spouses who have their own private business in conjunction with their military employment.

For example, customers who file *Married Filing Jointly* in which a spouse owns a small computer consultation business off-post cannot be served by the Tax Center. Two exceptions to this guidance are ID card holders who own up to three rental properties and/or those whose spouses are Family Care Providers (FCP).

So, with W-2 form in hand, you are now ready to cash in that pot of gold. Not so fast! Before going to your local tax center, ensure that you have one or the other of the following items: a previous year's tax return that was e-filed and accepted or your social security card.

One of the biggest obstacles faced during last year's tax season was the number of e-filed tax returns rejected by the

IRS because of inaccurate social security numbers. In the past, 90 percent of all errors accounted for with e-filed tax returns were because of incorrect social security numbers.

You might be thinking, who doesn't know their own social security number—it's even printed on the back of the ID card? Surprisingly, sometimes the social security number that is displayed on the ID card is incorrect. Plus, those soldiers and spouses who just got married or those who just had babies might not know the social security number of their loved ones by heart.

Even a one-digit difference on the e-filed tax return or an incorrect spelling of a name will cause a return to be rejected by the IRS. Therefore, the only solution is to require that clients bring a previously accepted e-filed tax return or their social security cards.

The other 10 percent of rejected e-filed tax returns are those where the service member or spouse is claimed by someone

else. This is an especially common problem typically for young soldiers who have just joined the Army and are still being claimed by parents.

Along with a copy of your W-2 form, bring any 1099 forms. These show interest earned from bank accounts, interest on any stocks and bonds, and interest paid on college loans. Moreover, most Soldiers who were deployed in 2004 will more than likely experience some kind of tax break. For example, most military pay is not taxable while serving in a combat zone.

Another tax benefit many soldiers will qualify for is the Earned Income Credit.

According to the IRS Earned Income Credit Fact

book, put out by the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, "Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low or moderate incomes. Workers who qualify for EIC and file a federal tax return can get back some or all of the federal income tax that was taken out of their pay during the year." They may even get additional money paid to them from the government.

Because deployed Soldiers' income is not taxed, many soldiers will qualify for EIC despite earning a decent salary in 2004. Both single and married soldiers may qualify for EIC.

Tax centers have been opened in Friedberg, Giessen, and Baumholder.

Here are some final tips from the tax center that will make the tax season more successful for clients and tax preparers alike.

1) If you are a *Married Filing Jointly*, both spouses must be present to correctly file tax forms. If one spouse cannot be present at the time of filing, then a special or general power-of-attorney is required. Your local Legal Assistance Office is available to provide powers-of-attorney.

2) For those ID card holders who still have not filed taxes for previous years, the tax center can help you file back taxes too. Please schedule an appointment for this service.

3) Finally, in an effort to service as many clients as possible and to maximize the space of the Wiesbaden Tax Center, there will be no specific "play room" designated for small children who accompany parents to the Tax Center. Please leave small children at home.

The Wiesbaden Tax Office opened its doors and began seeing clients on Feb. 4. Tax season officially ends on April 15, 2005; however, those serving overseas receive a two-month extension to file. Therefore, all Tax Centers will continue serving clients until June.

Editor's Note: Spc. Danielle Johansen is assigned to the IAD JAG Office and contributed to this issue of Ironside Magazine through the IAD Unit Writers Program. Please contact IAD PAO at DSN 337-4860 or CIV 0611-705-4860 if you are interested in being published in Ironside Magazine.

Community Tax Centers

Wiesbaden Tax Center

Point of Contact: Capt. Andrew Slitt

Location: Above the Shoppette

Opening Day: February 4, 2005

Hours of Operation: Monday thru Friday, 9 am-5 pm

Telephone Numbers DSN/Civilian: 337-4755/0611-705-4755

Giessen Tax Center

Point of Contact: Capt. John Dohn

Location: Building Number 7, 2d Floor, Room 254

Opening Day: February 1, 2005

Hours of Operation: 9am-5pm (last walk-in 4:30 pm)

Telephone Numbers DSN/Civilian: 343-8261/8268 Civ: 0641-402-8261/8268

Friedberg Tax Center

Point of Contact: Capt. Tara Scardino

Contact Legal Assistance Office for more information:

DSN: 324-3873 CIV: 06031-81-3873

Baumholder Tax Center

Point of Contact: Capt. Leticia Soto

Hours of Operation: M-T 9 am-5 pm (last walk-in 3 pm) Friday 9 am to 3 pm (last walk-in 3 pm)

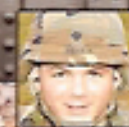
DSN: 485-6908/7448 CIV: 0678-36-/6908/7448

Save yourself some money . . .

Local Tax Centers
are

FREE!

Applies to valid ID card holders



Division's Soldiers face new trials at quarterly board



Sgt. Nathan Hunt listens intently to task instructions from a member of the board cadre before being evaluated on the SALUTE report procedures over a secure network.

A noncommissioned officer with 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, and a private first class with 69th Chemical Company edged out the competition for the 1st Armored Division NCO and Soldier of the quarter award after a three-day competition Jan. 11-14 in Friedberg, Germany.

Sgt. Jessie Carr and Pfc. Aaron Jewel took top honors over eight other Soldiers who competed for this award.

The competition incorporated basic Soldier skills, and general military knowledge.

Each soldier and NCO was selected by the brigade sergeant major to forward to compete at the quarterly competition.

Along with each soldier was a sponsor from the same Brigade, whose responsibility was to prepare, coach and support the competitors.

Each sponsor was with their competitor through out the three-day competition making sure they had all the equipment and guidance they needed.

Before event, the competitors and their sponsors were in processed by verifying personal data and being logged for accountability. Each soldier was issued a room and briefed



Sgt. Ian Schmeckpeper of the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, lays down suppressive fire as an OPFOR Soldier. Schmeckpeper and other 1-36 Soldiers played the enemy in the Soldier/NCO Quarter competition in Friedberg, Germany.

about the competition, shown around Ray Barracks and the finally local training area.

"In-processing was conducted by the 1st Brigade staff in a very professional manner," said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Pinion, noncommissioned officer in charge of the competition. "The operation was clearly rehearsed and well organized."

The first day of the event was kicked off with the Army Physical Fitness Test, which consists of a timed two-mile run, push-ups and sit-ups.

After successful completion of the PT test, the six remaining Soldiers moved on to the land navigation exercise. The competitors completed a written map test before they were briefed and sent out to accomplish this warrior task.

"The event I enjoyed most was the land navigation course. This event is great exercise to help me with my job," said Pfc. Alexander Froede, 2nd Brigade.

The second day's events were based on common task training.

Nineteen stations were set up to challenge each NCO and Soldier's knowledge of basic military tasks.

Small shelters were built and Soldiers dressed as enemy insurgents mimicked what might be seen in Operation Iraqi

Freedom. From this station the competitors had to communicate what they saw using a tactical radio with a secure network to give a spot report.

Many of the day's test stations dealt with first aid situations which included treating a victim with an open chest wound, preventing or controlling shock and requesting medical evacuation.

Other tasks for the day included maintaining M16 rifle and moving under indirect fire.

"The most challenging part of this competition was the common task training," said Carr. "It was like going to a board but instead of spouting off answers, I had to perform the action. To go through the motions was a lot harder."

The last day of the event included a timed four-mile foot march, qualification with the M16-A2 rifle and a face-to-face with the division's top noncommissioned officers in a question and answer session.

"The board was the most challenging part of the competition for me. It was very difficult not to be nervous and to try to remember every answer," said Jewel.

... Continued next ...



Pfc. Aaron Jewel, from the 69th Chemical Company gives a sigh of relief after completing the nuclear, biological and chemical portion and final testing station for the NCO and Soldier of the quarter competition. Jewel took top honors in the three-day event, which took place Jan. 11-14 in Friedberg, Germany.

... Continued from previous

The board, which was conducted by the division command sergeants major, included questions covering common tasks, military history, military regulations and other general military knowledge.

After the board, the NCOs and Soldiers headed over to the post's restaurant for an awards presentation and an informal get together.

Command Sgt. Maj. Russell Sadler, 4th Brigade and acting division command sergeant major, gave a speech congratulating the competitors for their efforts.

"All of these NCOs, Soldiers and Sponsors should be given a hand," he said. "These soldiers have all come here to perform these grueling tasks in this terrible weather just to prove they are the best."

Following Sadler's speech, the winners of the event were announced and brought to the front for a round of applause.

Carr and Jewel spoke with, and were congratulated by, Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Blackwood, the division command sergeant major, who was unable to attend because of State-side business, by phone.

After the conversation the division's best NCO and Soldier were awarded coins and certificates for their performance.

Regardless of the competition's outcome all the soldiers are winners, said Sgt. Maj. Thomas Ashton, 2nd Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment command sergeant major.

This type of training is very important for the army because it reiterates common task training which every soldier needs on the battlefield regardless of job title, he said.

"This type of competition also gets Soldiers motivated to show they are the best," Ashton said. "To recognize Soldiers for their accomplishments should be a motivation for everyone."

Editors Note: The 1AD Soldier/NCO of the Quarter Board has been modified to reflect the focus on the Army's Warrior Tasks and Drills.

Are you . . . Fit to Fight?

By Pvt. Jennifer M. Mc Fadden

Now that the new year has arrived people everywhere are making resolutions to lose a few pounds, get more organized or just make more time for the things they like to do.

Although most of these pledges and promises did not survive through the end of January, one resolution — at least for Soldiers — that should be given a second thought is becoming fit to fight through weight loss, increasing your muscle mass and becoming physically tough.

Reports from the U.S. Surgeon General say that if a person is overweight or obese, losing just 10 percent of your body weight can improve your overall health.

However, weight loss seems to be difficult for many people and a gradual approach to losing excess poundage is the best way to achieve your weight target.

Setting realistic goals is the beginning of new start.

Most health care professionals recommend taking off 1/2 to 2 pounds a week.

"Making small goals is the same as making a couple degrees of adjustment to your azimuth when navigating," said Spc. Tsonera Rhoades a health care specialist at the Wiesbaden Army Airfield Health Clinic. "If you start succeeding often, even if it is just a little bit, you build a foundation for continuous success."

These goals can be accomplished through diet and exercise, she said. Changes in diet can be guided by the Surgeon General's dietary recommendations. They provide the foundation for a well balanced and healthy lifestyle.

For most people, maintaining body weight in a healthy range can be accomplished by balancing the intake of calories from foods and beverages with calories

burned off during exercise or daily activities.

"Educating yourself on what you are eating results in a better diet and will help bring your body weight to a healthier range," said Spc. Mary Ferguson, 3rd Corps Support Command. She is also a personal trainer stationed at Wiesbaden Air Field. "This can be done by decreasing calorie intake while maintaining an adequate nutrient intake and increasing physical activity."

However, a dietary change aids muscle gain as well and is recommended by most personal trainers, she said.

Adding protein to rebuild muscles and carbohydrates to provide energy is a common plan professional trainers use to prepare their clients seeking to gain muscle mass, she said. Gaining muscle has a different exercise approach as well.

"By decreasing cardiovascular exercise and increasing weight training helps toward the overall goal of gaining muscle mass," explained Ferguson.

No matter how many goals that are made, each Soldier must decide for him or herself to stick with them and tough out the hard times.

"Dietary and exercise goals are often hard to keep. Some ways to combat this would be to keep a journal," suggested Rhoades. "Whether it is a food log showing what calories are being consumed or an exercise log to give motivation by showing improvement to finding a buddy to work out with or eat with."

"Setting goals and tailoring a plan to reach those goals will help Soldiers obtain the physical fitness level they desire."

Creating an exercise plan that allows Soldiers to progress, provide overload to the point of temporary muscle failure, va-

riety of challenging exercises and most importantly, rest and recovery, is a good recipe for overall physical toughness, according to the Soldier Health Maintenance Manual.

The Army has many resources to provide assistance to Soldiers looking for a way to become physically fit.

Health clinics staff, personal trainers, outdoor recreation personnel and nutritionists offer advice and assistance to a Soldier making a life change to become fit or simply maintaining physical toughness.

However physical toughness is much more than just brute strength and physical endurance. Mental fortitude is also a significant part of the overall "physically-tough Soldier package."

"Going the extra mile, doing the extra push-up or sit-up or just taking the time to help someone else even if it at the sacrifice of free time is being physically tough," said Command Sgt. Maj. Roger P. Blackwood the 1st Armored Division command sergeant major.

According to Field Manual 21-20, Army Physical Fitness, the benefits to be derived from a good physical fitness program are many.

Being physically fit can reduce the number of Soldiers medically unfit for duty profile and reporting to sick call. It can also invigorate training, enhance productivity and mental alertness.

A good physical fitness program also promotes team cohesion and combat survivability.

"The military is a team and like any team we don't win unless we are working together," explained Blackwood. "Our field however is the field of battle, and that field is unforgiving. There are no time-outs for those who aren't physically tough or fit."



Bulldog Brigade receives Valorous Unit Award

Story and photo by April Blackmon

The 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, at Fort Riley received the Valorous Unit Award Jan. 21, just before the brigade returns to Iraq.

The Secretary of the Army bestows the award for heroism in action against an armed enemy of the United States. To receive the award, a unit must display such gallantry, determination and esprit de corps in accomplishing its mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions as to set it apart and above other units participating in the same campaign. It rarely is given to a unit larger than a battalion.

"You all should be proud to be a part of this great brigade," said Col. David Bishop, 3rd BCT commander.

Brig. Gen. Michael Tucker, 1st Armored Division's assistant division commander for maneuver, brought a message to Fort Riley from Maj. Gen. Martin Dempsey, 1st Armored Division commanding general.

"We served together in Iraq in the most historic of times. Quite simply, the Bulldogs helped bring the city of Baghdad back to life. The nation is fortunate to have the Bulldogs' service," Tucker said.

The 3rd BCT reactivated at Fort Riley on Feb. 16, 1996. It deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from Feb. 20, 2003, to April 15, 2004. Its OIF mission included combat followed by stability and support operations.

Soldiers of the 3rd BCT said they were honored to receive the award.

"We're all proud to be recognized for what we do," said Staff Sgt. John Norman of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 70th Armor.

"I think it's great — great for the unit, great for the morale of our Soldiers, especially for the new ones who haven't experienced Iraq yet. It's great for them to know the higher-ups are still thinking of us," said Sgt. Joshua Lichtensteiger, of Company A, 70th Engineer Battalion.



Maj. Gen. Michael S. Tucker (left), assistant division commander for maneuver, 1st Armored Division, and Col. Dave Bishop (center), commander, 3rd Brigade Combat Team at Fort Riley, help hang a streamer designating the brigade as a recipient of the Valorous Unit Award to the brigade's colors. The streamer and award were presented to honor the brigade for its valor during Operation Iraqi Freedom during a ceremony Jan. 21 at Craig Fitness Center at Fort Riley, a few days before the brigade was to redeploy to Iraq.

Iron Cooks face off for Food Service Specialist and NCO of the Quarter

Story and photos Pvt. Jennifer M. McFadden

A specialist from the Service Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, and a noncommissioned officer from the 16th Engineer Battalion, won the 1st Armored Division's Food Service Specialist and NCO of the Quarter competition held at Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Jan. 25.

Spec. Lars Landers and Sgt. Anderson Tull topped the other six Soldiers in a question and answer board.

"This was the first board for the fiscal year because the division was down range," said Sgt. Maj. Randy S. Varner, 1AD's Logistics Section (G-4) food service sergeant major. "We wanted all the cooks to get settled in and get back to a routine."

The board, which was conducted by food service NCOs from various 1AD brigades, covered both general military knowledge and knowledge relating to their military occupational specialty of food service.

"Getting ready for this board was very time consuming. There were many hours of studying. Not just for myself but one of my Soldiers was here as well and we studied and supported each other," said Tull.

All nominees completed a question and answer board at the brigade level to reach the division competition.

"I was very pleased to get this far. It was very unexpected to be selected

for the brigade level. To be going to the next level is exciting," said Landers.

The winners of the quarter board will move on to upcoming competition at V Corps.

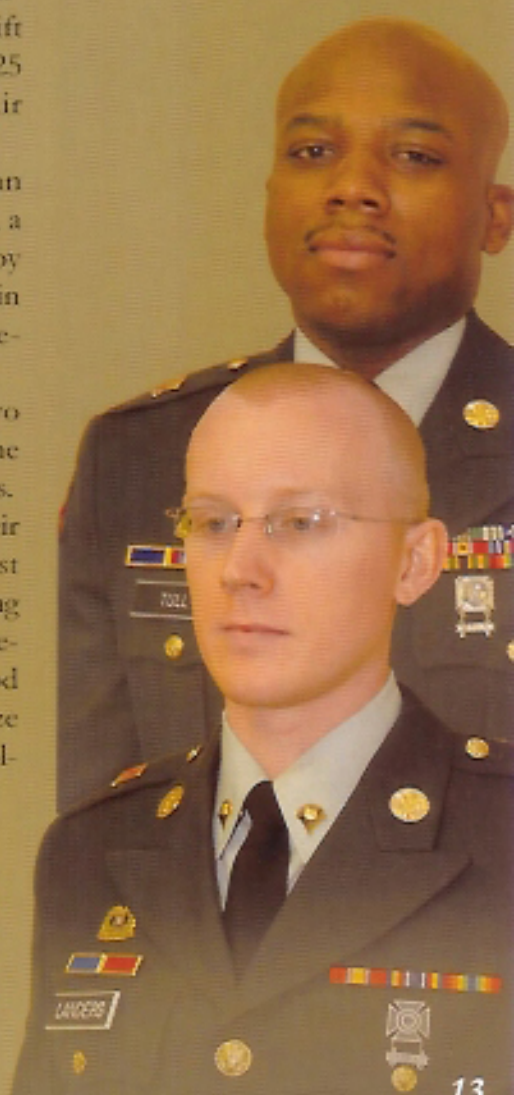
Support for this board came in the form of a \$50 gift certificate from the Edelweiss Hotel in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, two \$50 gift certificates from the USO and a \$25 gift certificate from the Army/Air Force Exchange Service.

Winners will also receive an Army Achievement Medal, a trophy, a four-day pass and a coin presented by 1AD commander, Maj. Gen. Martin Dempsey. The awards will be presented at a later date.

After all was said and done two winners walked out, ready to start the journey to the next board at V Corps.

"Cooks don't always get their just due," said Varner. "When the rest of the unit is out in the field training we are here, behind the scenes, sometimes completely unseen. We, as food service specialists, should recognize these outstanding and dedicated Soldiers."

Spec. Lars Lander (Front), from Service Battery 4-27 FA and Sgt. Anderson Tull (Back) from the 16th Engineer Battalion, both food service specialists, won top honors in the Food Service Specialist and NCO of the Quarter competition at Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Jan. 25.





Buedingen's
bad boys back
in town and . . .

Back in the saddle again!

1st Cavalry

Story and photo by Sgt. Christopher Stanis

There's a little more skill involved in riding the horses of today's U.S. Cavalry, but the Iron Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, are out to prove they can break in any beast sent their way.

One of these modern mustangs is the Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle. The "Blackhawks" have taken them from their Buedingen, Germany, home to the Grafenwoehr Training Area for the first Gunnery since returning from Iraq in July 2004.

"We go to gunnery approximately every six months," said Staff Sgt. Armando Mendoza, a Bradley commander in Comanche Troop 1/1 CAV. "This is where we test our proficiency on our vehicles."

A Gunnery rotation lasts about 30 day, running the Soldiers through numerous levels, or tables as they're called, of training, but the highlight of the rotation is Table VIII.

"This is our qualification," said Sgt. Donald Smith, a Bradley gunner with Comanche Troop. "All of the tables before this are just practice. This is the big day."

Bradley Table VIII qualification is based from 10 target engagements – six daytimes and four nighttimes.

"A crew has to complete seven Ts or Ps (Trained and Needs Practice), hit one (nuclear, biological and chemical) engagement and two nighttime engagements to qualify," said El Paso, Texas, native Mendoza.

The other tables include Table V – Soldiers fire the M240, a 7.62mm coaxial (COAX) machine gun; tables VI

and VII – Soldiers fire the COAX and the .25mm main gun; and Table XII – Soldiers come together for a platoon-sized combat maneuver.

To give the Iron Cavalrymen extra incentive to excel on qualification is the "Top Gun" designation. This goes to the crew that shoots best during Table VIII.

"This is decided by who has the most Ts," explained Eureka, Calif., resident Smith. "If more than one gun has the same number of Ts they go by kill times (how quickly a crew kills a target)."

The lucky crew holds this title until the next gunnery rotation.

This gunnery has been more than just assessing Soldiers' skills on the weapons systems. It has allowed a clearer picture of deficiencies following a combat deployment.

"This equipment was in Iraq for 16 months," Smith said. "(Gunnery) has been an eye opener."

Work needs to be done, but it hasn't stopped the cavalry.

"It's been a work in progress," Smith concluded, "but it has been good training and I'm glad to be out here and be a part of it."

Editor's Note: The next issue will include more articles on 1/1 CAV as they focus on training in Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, Germany.

Table VIII

*"This is where we
test our proficiency
on our vehicles."*

Staff Sgt. Armando Mendoza
1/1 CAV